



**CITY OF SAINT PAUL**  
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**Date:** March 19, 2015  
**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Josh Williams, Senior Planner  
**RE:** The Campus Boundaries Zoning Study

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The purpose of this memo is to provide information on a potential study of college, university, and campus boundary expansion standards in the zoning code. The potential study is on the agenda for discussion at the March 27 Planning Commission meeting. However, the staff recommendation to initiate the study will not be reviewed by the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committees until their joint meeting on March 24. If the committees vote to forward a recommendation to initiate to the full Planning Commission, an updated memo and draft resolution will be sent out to Planning Commission members prior to the March 27 meeting. If not, the item will be removed from the agenda. Background on the purpose of the zoning study is provided below.

### **Background**

Over the past several years, a large number of single-family residential properties have been acquired by institutions of higher education in Saint Paul. Some of these have been demolished and left as empty lots. The institutions undertaking these actions have done so in the absence of a clear plan for campus growth. This has raised substantial public concern over the potential for damage to the character and vitality of the residential neighborhoods surrounding these campuses.

The Saint Paul Zoning Code requires a conditional use permit for colleges, universities, and seminaries when they are located in residential districts. Sec. 65.220 of the Zoning Code lists standards and conditions for these institutions, and requires establishment of a defined campus boundary in residential districts and Planning Commission approval of any expansion of those campus boundaries.

Campuses include a wide variety of uses, some of which have the potential to be incompatible with adjacent residential uses. The requirement for a conditional use permit defining campus boundaries allows the Planning Commission to evaluate proposed campus expansions and permit expansions only under such conditions as they will not have a substantial negative impact on surrounding residential neighborhoods.

The purpose of the Campus Boundaries Zoning Study is to evaluate whether or not the Zoning Code provides for adequate regulation of campus boundaries.

city of saint paul  
planning commission resolution  
file number  
date

Resolution to initiate the Campus Boundaries Zoning Study

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Zoning Code to promote and to protect the public health, safety, morals, aesthetics, economic viability and general welfare of the community and to protect all areas of the city from harmful encroachment by incompatible uses; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Zoning Code requires a conditional use permit for colleges, universities, and seminaries when located in residential districts; and

WHEREAS, Sec. 65.220 of the Zoning Code lists standards and conditions for colleges, universities, and seminaries, and for the establishment and expansion of defined campus boundaries for said institutions when located in residential districts; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Planning Commission finds that it is the intent of the provisions of Sec. 65.220 to ensure that college, university, and seminary campuses do not negatively impact adjacent residential neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Planning Commission further finds that it is the intent of the provisions of Sec. 65.220 of the Zoning Code to ensure that expansion of college, university, and seminary campuses occurs in an orderly and well-planned manner; and

WHEREAS, policy 1.57 of the Land Use Chapter of the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan calls for the City to encourage communication between educational institutions and residents of the community when those institutions seek to expand or make significant changes to their campuses; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Planning Commission finds that institutional acquisition and demolition of residential properties outside of campus boundaries in the absence of plans made available to the public and a campus boundary expansion approved by the Saint Paul Planning Commission is detrimental to the character and general welfare of residential neighborhoods; and

moved by \_\_\_\_\_  
seconded by \_\_\_\_\_  
in favor \_\_\_\_\_  
against \_\_\_\_\_

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WHEREAS, Sec. 61.801(b) of the Zoning Code authorizes the Planning Commission to initiate an amendment to the Zoning Code as provided in Minnesota Statutes Sec. 462.357, Subd. 4;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Saint Paul Planning Commission hereby initiates the Campus Boundaries Zoning Study.